

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

Lotts' Legacy Boarding School
24 South 100 West
Escalante, Utah 84726

May 11, 2006



Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Lotts' Legacy Boarding School
24 South 100 West
Escalante, Utah 84726**

May 11, 2006

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

**Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

**DIVISION OF
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS**

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase student achievement.

In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes. It is a three-phased evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, May 11, 2006, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Lotts' Legacy Boarding School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the visiting team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Pauline Lott is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at of Lotts' Legacy Boarding School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at of Lotts' Legacy Boarding School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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9/8/2005

LOTTS' LEGACY BOARDING SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Pauline G. Lott..... Principal
Emilee Lott-Woolsey Assistant Principal

Counseling

Randy Soderquist, LCSW..... Counselor
Angie Alvey Academic Counselor, as needed

Support Staff

Sue Bassett
Melani Torgersen

Shelley Barney
Dennis L. Lott

Mike E. Woolsey

Faculty

Elaine Lott
Emilee Lott-Woolsey

Pauline G. Lott
Karl Spencer

Marjie Lee Spencer

LOTT'S' LEGACY BOARDING SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

**What we have to learn to do,
we learn by doing**

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe:

- Every child can learn and deserves the opportunity to do so.
- Every child has his/her own unique and special need(s) to be addressed in the learning process.
- In a variety of techniques/methods to assess a student's achievement (knowledge or skills).
- A student learns best when surrounded by safe, positive, and nurturing relationships (peers, adults, and community) and environment.
- Our curriculum should be guided by the Utah State Core Curriculum.
- In teaching and modeling skills and behaviors that will enable students to become confident, contributing, self-directed, responsible, respectful, and life-long learning citizens of a community.
- In the importance of teamwork in the learning and living processes and environments.

MOTTO

Living a legacy of loving, learning and leadership

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Ralph P. Vander Heide, Ph.D. Accreditation Consultant, Chairperson

Judith H. Vander Heide, MS, Accreditation Consultant

VISITING TEAM REPORT

LOTTS' LEGACY BOARDING SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Lotts' Legacy Boarding School is located in Escalante, Utah, a small rural community with a population of fewer than 1,000 persons. The self-study explains that "the setting and size are ideal for this small, private Special Purpose School and enhance the fulfillment of the school's goals." It goes on to clarify that Lotts' Legacy Boarding School is "a provider of educational services to youth with special academic and behavioral related needs." It has the capacity and is licensed to provide services for 12 youths of both sexes between the ages of 12 and 18. The length of stay varies from less than a year to possibly more than one year. At the present time there are only four students at Lotts' Legacy Boarding School.

It is the intent of the owners (three "Lott ladies"—Mrs. Pauline Lott and her two daughters) to keep the number of students at no more than 12 in order to meet the needs of students in keeping with the mission and belief statements.

The school is housed in a newly renovate former motel. Students may have single rooms or be housed two to four per room. Three of the motel rooms have been converted to classrooms, and there is a multipurpose room, office, kitchen, and laundry. Students have access to private study areas, and recreational facilities and computers are provided.

All Students are classified as "low risk," and all have been screened very carefully by an "enrollment specialist" upon entry. Individual needs are identified. The school is secured by personnel and an alarm system.

The staff is highly qualified. The Lott family and other personnel demonstrated evidence love for students, the school, and the community. Personnel, as well as the school, meet state licensing requirements and all are experienced. For example, each of the "Lott ladies" has a master's degree in education or business with various minors pertinent to education, as well as state certification in administration and teaching.

- a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of their profile and what modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

Primarily the profiling and surveys indicate that all stakeholders have very positive feelings about all aspects of the program a Lotts' Legacy Boarding School. The Visiting Team does not recommend any modifications at this time.

Profiling information in the self-study covered the eleven standards of NAAS; surveys of teachers, students, and parents; ethnicity and gender percentages; test scores; and more data which, taken together, provides the “big picture” of the school and its educational emphasis.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

The Visiting Team has no suggestions. The profiling was conscientious and thorough.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

This was consummately accomplished for such a small school.

- b) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The self-study reflected accurately the school’s current status. Both strengths and limitations are described.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Lotts’ Legacy Boarding School’s desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

- Personal Maintenance
- Family-Team Living
- Academic Excellence
- Community Involvement
- Equine Experiential Learning

Each of the DRSLs is precisely defined, and three indicators of measurable achievement are given for each.

In addition to the DRSLs, stakeholders have specified the following five “goals and objectives” that complement the DRSLs:

- Stress the Positive and Build Self-Esteem
- Make Learning Rewarding
- Teach With Respect and Caring
- Parent Relations (Student, Parent, Teacher and Staff)

As with the DRSLs, each of the above goals is broken down into achievable sub-goals such as “Encourage parents’ input,” “Use a variety of instructional approaches,” and “Establish a climate in which there is a mutual respect between students and staff.”

The Visiting Team observed that all faculty and staff members at the school seem to be cognizant of all the objectives and strive to attain them. The school has a nurturing atmosphere.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

Indeed, a shared vision is obvious. All stakeholders appear to be pulling in the same direction.

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The beliefs support success and ongoing improvement. The belief statements are relevant and free of jargon, and they give direction to the school.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The Visiting Team was impressed with the degree of alignment. The beliefs and mission are reflected in the DRSLs. Congruence is clearly evident.

Curriculum Development:

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

A core commitment at Lotts' Legacy Boarding School is that all curricula be based on the Utah Core with inclusion of the Life Skills.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

The teaching staff is very small, but excellent collaboration is evident.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

A core belief and commitment at the school is to vary instructional methods as is appropriate and needed by each individual student.

- b) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

The school provides numerous such opportunities, from working with animals to community service. In conversations with school personnel and from information noted in the self-study, the Visiting Team concluded that this is a strong component of the program at Lotts' Legacy Boarding School.

Quality Assessment Systems:

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school wide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

Assessments are varied and geared to individuals. Specific desired learning outcomes are measured. Testing reflects performance standards. All testing is fair and equitable.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

Leadership is outstanding in all respects. Since the owners are also teachers and administrators, it is all well supported and integrated.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

To a great extent; see above.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

This is well done; see above.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

This is well done; see above.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?*

This is thoughtfully done. See above.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

This is well accomplished. See above.

Community Building:

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

This is well done.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

This is not applicable to this school.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

This is provided as needed.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The school has created conditions that promote and support productive change. There is evidence of an outstanding commitment to continuous improvement.

**CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS
(NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI**

Standard I – Educational Program

This very small school meets all four sections of this standard. The educational program is aligned with the mission statement and beliefs. The Visiting Team observed that the vision for the school has been collaboratively developed. The instructional and organizational practices, as well as the policies and procedures, support the desired results for student learning and prepare students to succeed in a culturally diverse, democratic society. The program of studies meets the requirements of the state.

Standard II – Student Personnel Services

All three sections of this standard are met. Personnel services are designed to give appropriate systematic assistance to students as called for in the subsections of the requirements. The assigned personnel for guidance includes a minimum of one full-time person for each 400 students enrolled. The primary objective of the counseling program is to promote and enhance the academic and personal development of students and to prepare them for post-high school experiences.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard is well met. The school plant provides for instructional activities and programs and incorporates aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere. It provides for the health and safety of students and all school faculty and personnel.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

Lotts' Legacy Boarding School meets this standard in nontraditional ways. The school library media program is a resource for literacy, information, and curriculum support. It contributes to the achievement of the DRSLs. The school library, containing over 3,000 volumes, is the private collection of Pauline Lott, founder of the school. Students also use the bookmobile, city library, and the library of the Senior Citizens Center. Sufficient funds are provided each year to meet the library/media needs of students and teachers.

Standard V – Records

This standard is met. Student records are maintained, handled, and protected in the best interests of students and parents. Students and parents have the right to access personal student records and are ensured the privacy of such, as guaranteed by federal legislation.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

The five sections of this standard are met. The school improvement plan focuses on the total school rather than each of the separate components within the school. Systematic analysis of data regarding the performance of students has been incorporated into the comprehensive school improvement process, as has ongoing examination of instructional practices. The plan is updated and adjusted each year in alignment with perceived needs.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard is met. All professional personnel are in compliance with the licensing requirements of the state of Utah, and are endorsed or properly temporarily exempted for the subjects they are teaching.

Standard VIII – Administration

This standard is met. The administration of Lotts' Legacy Boarding School provides educational leadership, supervises and coordinates programs, and carries out the necessary and required administrative procedures.

Standard IX – Teacher Load

This standard is easily met. The total number of students instructed by any one teacher in any one grading period does not exceed numbers set by the Utah State Office of Education and/or NAAS.

Standard X – Activities

This standard is very well met. The school supports a range of activities that supplement and augment the basic instructional program by providing additional enriching experiences for students consistent with the school's mission and beliefs. Attention is paid to providing equal opportunities.

Standard XI – Business Practices

Lotts' Legacy Boarding School complies with this standard. The school is financially responsible. Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds. The school's advertising and promotional literature are completely truthful and ethical.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The action plan is adequate. It is well thought out and directly aligned with the DRSLs. Time lines are given, with specific objectives and persons responsible for overseeing attainment of objectives.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

Complete commitment is evident.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be?*

Follow-up procedures are logical and sound.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

The Visiting Team is eager to point out that the self-study completed by stakeholders of Lotts' Legacy could serve as a model of excellence. It has accomplished in a consummate fashion the objectives of the self-evaluation required by the state of Utah and NAAS.

- The Visiting Team commends the Lott family and all other personnel for their high level of commitment to excellence and to helping troubled young persons improve their lives.
- The Visiting Team commends all personnel for their cooperation with the Visiting Team.
- The Visiting Team commends all personnel who produced the excellent, insightful self-study.

Recommendations:

The Visiting Team makes only one recommendation:

- It is suggested that more students be recruited in order that they may participate in this outstanding program of education and rehabilitation through love.

Lastly, the school is reminded that accreditation provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the school. A primary purpose of accreditation is to protect the public trust. Accreditation promotes voluntary self-regulation. It is a means of showing confidence in a school's performance, i.e., that both quantitative and qualitative standards have been established. An ultimate objective of the self-study and accreditation process should be that schools institutionalize the process of reflective inquiry and thereby become internally responsible for the maintenance of standards—even the creation of standards.